

CLIMATE CHANGE MATTERS

Issue 17 — October 2013

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Director's Note



Dr Netatua Pelesikoti

*Climate Change Division Director
SPREP*

Dear Readers,

Welcome to the October edition of the monthly Climate Change Matters newsletter.

SPREP has just completed a successful SPREP Meeting in September. This is an important annual event where SPREP national focal points reviewed the progress made on programmes delivery to Members against the approved budget of the previous year. The recent SPREP Meeting also discussed and approved the 2014 work plan and budget.

Two new regional climate change projects have recently started and will be implemented for the next four years were reported to the SPREP Meeting. They are the Finland – Pacific Project to support national meteorological services and communities/users of weather and climate information to reduce their vulnerability to the effects of climate change. Secondly, the ADB and WB coordinated Strategic Programme for Climate Resilience: Pacific Region

implemented by SPREP, SPC and PIFs. SPREP will implement two components; the first one on climate change and disaster risk reduction mainstreaming into national and sectoral strategies and actions and the development of rapid response mechanisms for climate change requests from PICTs.

The much-awaited Fifth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) on The Physical Science Basis of Climate Change is now available. SPREP, in collaboration with Climate Analytics, will discuss the implication of this report on the Pacific. In addition, in partnership with IPCC, USP and WG1 authors, an event will be held at USP on the IPCC Report 5 science and the Pacific.

This CCM edition also offers you a snapshot of the scope of SPREP's climate change programmes. In addition we welcome some new initiatives and projects who highlight their stories in this edition of the CCM Newsletter.

Talk to you in the next issue!

About Us

SPREP's Climate Change Division (CCD) is made up of three programmes:

1. Adaptation;
2. Mitigation; and
3. Policy and Science.

The work of the CCD is directed by the SPREP Strategic Plan 2011-2015 based on the climate change priorities of SPREP Members and consistent with the *Pacific Islands Framework for Action on Climate Change 2006-2015* (PIFACC) and other relevant and approved policy drivers such as the Pacific Plan and the Framework for Action on Disaster Risk Management.

SPREP's three (broad) climate change strategic priorities for 2011-2015 are:

1. Implementing adaptation measures;
2. Improving members' capacity, knowledge and understanding of climate change, and risk reduction;
3. Contributing to global greenhouse gas reduction

Please visit our website at:

www.sprep.org/Climate-Change/climate-change-about-us

SPREP commended for growing role by Prime Minister of Samoa

"SPREP is the lead agency in the Pacific region for climate change," reiterated Hon. Prime Minister of Samoa. Afioga Tuilaepa Lupesoli'ai Sailele Malielegaoi, during his opening address at the opening of the 24th meeting of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme.

"The last 20 years has seen environment becoming a more important issue and it has also seen a strengthening of the role and importance of SPREP. When SPREP came here it had a small but dedicated staff. Since that time the organisation has grown to address a range of critical issues for the Pacific."

Lupesoli'ai Sailele, Prime Minister of Samoa

For the full article: [Click here](#)



Photo: David Sheppard, Director-General of SPREP with the Prime Minister of Samoa (photo: SPREP)

New Climate Change Unit for Niue

A Climate Change unit based at the Department of Environment has been approved for the Island of Niue. This new division will be responsible for all matters relating to climate change, including the implementation of the Joint National Action Plan of Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management (JNAP).

For the full article: [Click here](#)

Niuean fisherman (photo: Niue Tourism Office)

'Whole of island' approach adopted in Kiribati

Kiribati is leading what appears to be a world-first effort to implement a 'whole-of-island' approach to climate change adaptation and disaster risk management in a coral atoll nation.

Within the integrated approach, SPREP and the Kiribati Ministry of Public Works and Utilities, with project funding from USAID, have begun assessments in order to provide improved water resources to communities on the atoll of Abaiang.

For the full article: [Click here](#)



Abaiang, Kiribati (Photo: Carlo Iacovino)

Workshop on Joint Platform for Sharing Warnings in the Pacific

Directors and representatives of 7 National Meteorological Services (NMSs) gathered in Suva, Fiji to discuss a Joint Platform for Sharing Warnings in the Pacific from 10th - 12th September 2013. The participating countries (Fiji, Tonga, Samoa, PNG, Solomon Islands Vanuatu, and Tuvalu) agreed to start a project to exchange natural hazard warning information between the SPREP member countries in the Pacific.

The project is part of the 4-year Finnish-Pacific (FINPAC) Project funded by the Government of Finland and implemented by SPREP with the help of the experts from the Finnish Meteorological Institute (FMI). The Project aims at "Reduced vulnerability of the Pacific Island Country villagers' livelihoods to the effects of Climate Change".



Photo: Workshop Participants

EMWIN and LRIT now operational in the Kiribati Meteorological Office



Photo: Kaibaua Airam, Assistant Technician of the Kiribati Meteorological Office accessing EMW

Kiribati Meteorological Office is now able to access information through the EMWIN and LRIT. The Emergency Managers Weather Information Network (EMWIN) is a satellite dissemination service that obtains weather forecasts, warnings, and other meteorological/tsunami information directly, in almost real time. The Low Rate Information Transmission (LRIT) is a similar broadcast that aids forecasters to prepare their warnings.

The installations, which were provided as a US contribution to the World Meteorological Organization and implemented by SPREP, also included training of staff on how to operate and analyze the new products.

National Met Services (NMSs) have dialogue with USP

A dialogue between the NMSs and University of the South Pacific (USP) Pacific Center for Environment & Sustainable Development held on 13th September 2013 discussed priority areas around 'Education, Training and Research Opportunities for NMSs'. This meeting was organised to discuss education, research and training opportunities available with USP as well as other issues raised at the Pacific Meteorological Council (PMC)-2 meeting in July 2013.

The meeting recognised that the Director of the RMI, FSM and Cook Islands volunteered to form the Working Group on Education, Research and Training, and they contributed to the discussion points raised during the meeting.



Photo: Representatives of NMSs and USP meet



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In Numbers: The Pacific Media and Climate Change project

Coordinated by SPREP and supported by PACCSAP, here's a snapshot of the AUD 200,000 project, now completed over a period of 14 months:

- **156** Pacific islanders underwent different types of training - **96** Pacific media personnel, **60** Pacific climate change practitioners.
- **44** Pacific media who received training contributed to a compendium of news and references on climate, leading to **196** Pacific climate change news stories and a further **98** news references over the period of the project.
- The Pacific Media team consisting of **8** Pacific reporters producing news on the July climate change meetings had **60** news articles uploaded to the SPREP Facebook page, they received over **30,000** hits over the period of **1** month.

PACC—Adaptation projects showcased at high-level meeting in Majuro

Climate change concerns dominated the recent 44th Pacific Islands Forum meeting in the Marshall Islands, so delegates were encouraged to hear some success stories from adaptation projects underway in the region.

Teams from the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), the Marshall Islands and Palau described practical measures being implemented in their countries under the Pacific Adaptation to Climate Change (PACC) programme.

For the full article:
[Click here](#)



Photo: PACC Solar water purification unit



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The PACC Project consists of 14 member countries; it is implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in partnership with the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP). It is funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and the Australian Agency for International Development with support from United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) Climate Change Capacity Development (C3D+) Programme.



Pacific Islands Forum leaders marshal the Pacific Response to climate change



To download:

[Click here](#)

The key outcome from the Forum itself was the Forum Communiqué which included the Majuro Declaration for Marshalling the Pacific response to Climate Change.

This is an important document underlining the need for urgent action on climate change in our region. The Communiqué included specific sections on climate change, Oceanscape and invasive species, with the latter section calling on SPREP and SPC to take action to address these issues.

Loss and damage

The Secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention for Climate Change (UNFCCC) convened an experts meeting, in Nadi, Fiji, to look specifically at how to meet future needs associated with loss and damage, with a focus in particular on slow onset events.

For the Pacific, key slow onset events of concern would include rising temperatures (both sea and air temperatures), sea level rise, ocean acidification and changing rainfall patterns.

As agreed in last year's United Nations climate change negotiations (in COP 18, held in Doha, December 2012) government negotiators and technical experts were asked to look at how the United Nations Convention on climate change might better address these impacts, associated with climate change.

Experts from the Pacific, including from SPREP, SPC, the Fiji Meteorological Service and World Health Organizations were asked to consider how their respective organizations might be able to play a role in addressing these key concerns.

SPREP was also able to take advantage of the fact that there were other Pacific Island delegates at this meeting to hold a first informal gathering, to discuss the role of the newly established Working Group, under the Pacific Climate Change Roundtable, which has been established specifically to provide a discussion space for this issue in the region.

This meeting was convened by the UNFCCC Secretariat as input into the upcoming 19th Conference of the Parties, which will be held in Warsaw in November 2013.

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SIDS DOCK: Side Event at the 3rd Pacific Environment Forum

A side event hosted at the 3rd Pacific Environment Forum provided a brief overview to the development of SIDS Dock. This included details on the political direction that gave rise to the SIDS Dock concept, namely the need to have a dedicated funding mechanism for SIDS to access for mitigation. In addition such a mechanism would free up resources for adaptation and other climate change work in country.

For the full article: [Click here](#)



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Photo: What is SIDS DOCK?

Professor Tim Flannery to give the opening address at the 9th Pacific Nature Conference

Internationally-renowned author, Professor Tim Flannery, will be the keynote speaker at the opening of the 9th Pacific Islands Conference on Nature Conservation and Protected Areas. The conference, which takes place every 4-5 years, will be held in Suva, Fiji from 2-6 December and is the Pacific region's premier event shaping biodiversity conservation work.

Professor Flannery, an internationally acclaimed scientist, explorer and conservationist, is the Director of the Australian Climate Council. Named Australian of the Year in 2007, Professor Flannery has published over 130 peer-reviewed scientific papers.

"So much of Earth's biodiversity resides in the south-west Pacific, With climate change such a major threat, this conference offers an important opportunity to protect unique organisms found nowhere else."

Professor Tim Flannery

This statement reflects the theme of the conference, *Natural Solutions: Building Resilience for a Changing Pacific*.



Photo: Professor Tim Flannery

More information on the conference, including how to register, can be found at the conference website:

www.sprep.org/pacificnatureconference.

Experts praise Pacific Sea Level Monitoring Project



Photo: Sea level monitoring site (SPC)

Regional experts in land and marine survey and management commended the work of the AusAID-funded Pacific Sea Level Monitoring (PSLM) Project at the International Federation of Surveyors (FIG) Symposium in Suva last week .

The Australian Bureau of Meteorology's Climate and Oceans Support Program in the Pacific (COSPPac) manages the sea-level monitoring project with technical support from SPC.

For the full article: [Click here](#)

Delegates talk national budget support for delivery of climate change finance

Global Climate Change Alliance: Pacific Small Island States (GCCA: PSIS) implemented by the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) brought together financial, planning and climate change representatives from the nine smaller islands states belonging to the project, other island representatives, and international and regional organisations and experts to discuss funding support for climate change.

For the full article: [Click here](#)



Photo: Delegates in Tonga (SPC)



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IPCC experts say humans have caused climate change

The much awaited for report from the Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) on The Physical Science Basis of climate change was released on September 30th. The 5th Assessment Report (AR5) noted that the evidence for human influence on climate change has grown since the last IPCC report in 2007.

The authors of the report looked at existing observations of the atmosphere and ocean to detect changes in the global climate, compared to the pre-industrial climate (before 1850). As few measurements were available in the 1800's, 'paleo-data' (e.g. temperature inferred from tree rings and ice-cores) were used to supplement the data available.

Climate models, run on some of the most sophisticated super computers in the world, were also used to simulate the past climate and to estimate likely climate change over the coming centuries.

Key points from the IPCC report:

- The rate of change to the climate since 1950 is the fastest in several millennia
- Ocean warming dominates the increase in heat, with the ocean taking up 90% of the extra energy accumulated
- The rate of sea level rise since the 1950s has been larger than the average rate for the past 2000 years
- Atmospheric CO₂ concentrations have not been this high for at least 800,000 years
- Human influence on the climate system is clear

This report on the science of climate change represents the combined efforts of over 600 contributing authors from 32 countries from around the world. The remainder of the IPCC Assessment Report 5 which deals with Vulnerability and Adaptation as well as Mitigation will be released in phases over the coming year.

More details can be found at www.sprep.org or www.ipcc.ch

Events in October 2013

Event	Location	Date
SOPAC STAR and Divisional Meeting	Cook Islands	5—11 Oct
FINPAC Baseline Study Meeting	Vanuatu	8 - 10 Oct
Caribbean Climate Change Center (5Cs) Executive Team visit	SPREP, Samoa	9-14 Oct
Communications Training for Pacific Island negotiators attending COP 19	SPREP, Samoa	15 Oct
Least Developed Countries and SIDS High Level Support Mechanism on Climate Change in preparation for the UNFCCC COP	SPREP, Samoa	16-18 Oct
PACC Palau—In-country support mission	Palau	28 Oct—2 Nov